

# Washington State Health Care Authority

## NEWS UPDATES— ACCOMPLISHMENTS – CONTINUING EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES:

*Interpreter Education Online*  
[www.interpretereducationonline.com](http://www.interpretereducationonline.com)

*Interpreting in Palliative Care*  
*Health Care Interpreter Network*  
<http://learn.hcin.org>

[Washington Courts Continuing Education](#)  
[Class List](#)

External links to other Internet sites and course announcements should not be construed as a Health Care Authority endorsement of the views, course content or privacy policies contained therein. Prices may vary.

## HCA INTERPRETER SERVICES

The Washington State Health Care Authority (HCA) has contracted with CTS LanguageLink to deploy a statewide program providing interpreters to limited-English proficient (LEP) clients receiving care through HCA, Washington Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), Medicaid/Medicare, and other eligible agencies. HCA, CTS LanguageLink (CTS), and the Interpreters Union are partnering to educate providers, patients, and the public on the importance of these services to ensure equal access to health care.

### IMPORTANT REMINDER FOR ELIGIBLE PROVIDERS:

We understand that in a busy office, it can often be difficult for front desk staff to juggle patients, patient records, telephones, and interpreters. HCA recognizes there are times when the interpreter checkout time is recorded incorrectly or accidentally left

incomplete on the Client Portal. CTS interpreters and HCA, however require providers' record the correct check-in and checkout times. Without it, CTS cannot record the appointment and in turn the interpreter will not be paid for their valued service to the eligible client and provider.

Interpreters are very diligent about making sure front office staff know of their arrivals and departures, and both HCA and CTS encourage them in this practice. Interpreters often have other appointments that they must get to throughout the day, so waiting in a line to be checked out by your staff may not be possible. In such cases, the patient's checkout time is often the same as the interpreter's, and we are happy to accept that information as valid.

This free-of-charge service supports your responsibility to provide equal access to limited English proficient (LEP) clients. In order for the State to continue to provide this service, we ask eligible providers to understand they play a crucial role in the good stewardship of federal and state funds. Please help by doing all you can to accurately document the interpreter's time in a way that supports our shared resources.

### Q: WHY AM I SEEING A BILL FOR SERVICES SCHEDULED THROUGH CTS LANGUAGELINK?

When the provider establishes an online account with CTS they must verify on the portal that if HCA does not pay for the services, the provider must assume all cost. CTS will verify at the time of the request the eligibility of the client. HCA also requires CTS to verify prior to the appointment as well. Services provided to ineligible clients will be directly billed to the provider.

Eligible providers accessing the State's service are responsible to verify whether the client is eligible for medical assistance coverage on the date of service, and if so, to check the limitations of the client's medical program. This helps prevent delivering a service the State cannot pay for or using the interpreter for an ineligible service.

Providers may also choose to confirm eligibility when making an appointment for a client. This could help avoid turning the client away at check-in or being responsible for covering the cost of the provided interpreter service. Checking eligibility when making an appointment can also help determine if the client is eligible for interpreter services for the appointment. Please see the ProviderOne Billing and Resource Guide for further information for steps on how to check eligibility.

[http://www.hca.wa.gov/medicaid/provider/Documents/provideroneguide/client\\_eligibility\\_bsp\\_coverage.pdf](http://www.hca.wa.gov/medicaid/provider/Documents/provideroneguide/client_eligibility_bsp_coverage.pdf)

If a provider schedules a service for ineligible clients or clients whose eligibility changes prior to the appointment date and becomes ineligible, HCA asks the provider notify CTS Language Link at least 48 hours in advance of the appointment (excluding weekends) and cancel the Medicaid-paid interpreter.

### Q: CAN I REQUEST A SPECIFIC INTERPRETER?

Yes. A provider may request a specific interpreter only if the following the guidelines below are met. On the CTS provider portal, you will find instructions on how to request a specific interpreter. If you need additional help with this option contact CTS directly, however, we require when you do so your request is only when not having the same interpreter impacts the ability of the provider to provide quality health care.

Ongoing treatment of medical conditions may qualify based on continuity of care, include but are not limited to:

- *ACTIVE CANCER TREATMENT*
- *CONTINUING COUNSELING SESSIONS*
- *APPLIED BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS THERAPY SESSIONS*
- *CANCER/DIALYSIS TREATMENTS AS REQUESTED BY THE PROVIDER*
- *ANY TREATMENT OR MEDICAL PROCEDURE WHERE A CHANGE IN INTERPRETER WILL IMPACT THE EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICACY OF THE APPOINTMENT*

If a specific interpreter is authorized by CTS for a client's medical appointments that authorization is for a limited period of time for that specific medical condition and must be related to ongoing treatment for completion of ongoing care for a specific medical condition.

It is not a medical necessity to have a specific interpreter for all day because of multiple patients who speak one language. HCA suggests you work with CTS to request a single interpreter for pre-scheduled consecutive appointments but would not support a specific interpreter unless all the appointments met the criteria outlined above.

Reasons that would not meet requirements under medical necessity are:

- *YOUR OFFICE HAS A LIST OF APPROVED INTERPRETERS*
- *BECAUSE THE INTERPRETER MAY NOT KNOW OFFICE PROCEDURE OR TO SATISFY THE STAFF OR DOCTORS AT THE CLINIC*
- *THE INTERPRETER IS NOT FROM THE CLIENT'S SPECIFIC COUNTRY*
- *TO CREATE LESS CONFUSION IN THE OFFICE*

Interpreters assigned through this program are also not to be used for non-language related tasks such as general office work or scheduling appointments. They may also only provide language-related services to the eligible client they were originally requested to provide health care services for.

HCA asked CTS LanguageLink to provide feedback and support when requested for this important option. Your assistance is appreciated as well when using this option; it ensures positive health outcomes and not positive business practices.

A medical interpreter is a skilled professional—bound by a code of ethics—who facilitates provider-patient communication. Interpreters providing services to your office through our contractor are all certified or authorized by the Department of Social and Health Services' Language Testing and Certification office, and additional requirements; such as scheduling requirements and background checks as defined in our contracts and the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

***Please email HCA if you have questions you feel all HCA providers would benefit from about this program:***

***[INTERPRETERSVCS@hca.wa.gov](mailto:INTERPRETERSVCS@hca.wa.gov)***

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## EXPECTATIONS AS THE INTERPRETER

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- SIGN AND COMPLY WITH THE [Interpreter Code of Ethics](#) FOR SPOKEN LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS
- PRESENT AT APPOINTMENTS, UPON REQUEST FROM PROVIDER OR LEP CLIENT, PICTURE IDENTIFICATION AND DSHS CERTIFICATE OR AUTHORIZATION LETTER
- ADHERE TO THE [RID-NAD Professional Code of Conduct](#) FOR SIGN-LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS
- ADHERE TO HEALTH INSURANCE PORTABILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT ([HIPAA](#)) requirements
- HAVE A VALID [Washington State Unified Business Identifier](#) (UBI) NUMBER OR TAX REGISTRATION NUMBER

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## TRAINING FOR INTERPRETERS AND PROVIDERS

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For training programs offered by CTS, contact them directly at:

	Email	Phone
<b>Interpreters:</b>	<a href="mailto:hcainterpreters@ctslangagelink.com">hcainterpreters@ctslangagelink.com</a>	1-866-519-3604
<b>Providers</b>	<a href="mailto:hcaproviders@ctslangagelink.com">hcaproviders@ctslangagelink.com</a>	1-800-535-7358, option 3

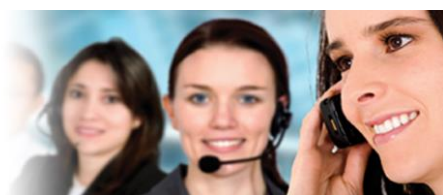
CTS LanguageLink offers provider training, Monday-Friday, 8:00am-5:00pm. If interested in training, submit your request along with contact information to the CTS either by email or at the phone number listed above. A member from the CTS LanguageLink Quality Assurance team will schedule training for you and your staff.

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## NEED HELP WITH BILLING AND SCHEDULING?

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CTS Language Link has a Frequently Answered Questions (FAQ) section for both interpreters and providers on



their website [hca.ctslangagelink.com](http://hca.ctslangagelink.com). If you require more information than what you find on their website, they encourage you to contact them direct at the email

and numbers listed under "Training for Interpreters and Providers" on this newsletter.

Please remember to check your portal frequently to approve your interpreter jobs. This will allow CTS to bill them to the State for payment. Remember to turn in your vouchers as well.

### ***Additional Resources for Interpreters and Providers***

National Standards on Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS)	<a href="http://www.thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov/Content/clas.asp">www.thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov/Content/clas.asp</a>
WA Department of Social and Health Services Language Interpreter and Translator Code of Professional Conduct	<a href="http://www.dshs.wa.gov/ltc/ethics.shtml">www.dshs.wa.gov/ltc/ethics.shtml</a>
International Medical Interpreters Association (IMIA) on Working with Medical Interpreters	<a href="http://www.imiaweb.org/uploads/pages/380_5.pdf">www.imiaweb.org/uploads/pages/380_5.pdf</a>
Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Federal Interagency	<a href="http://www.lep.gov/">www.lep.gov/</a>
CTS LanguageLink Provider Frequently Asked Questions	<a href="http://hca.ctslanguagelink.com/faq_Provider.php">hca.ctslanguagelink.com/faq_Provider.php</a>
Collective Bargaining Agreement	<a href="http://www.ofm.wa.gov/labor/agreements/13-15/nse_lap.pdf">http://www.ofm.wa.gov/labor/agreements/13-15/nse_lap.pdf</a>



**Do you or someone you know need help with applying for Washington Apple Health**

*Help is available to apply through the online Washington Healthplanfinder—*

[www.wahealthplanfinder.org](http://www.wahealthplanfinder.org)

*Applying online will quickly show you whether you're eligible for free or low-cost health coverage.*